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# TERMINAL TERROR FEAR



The latest rendering of Bruce Ratner's Atlantic Yards plan, designed by Frank Gehry. The high-rises dwarf the Williamsburgh Savings Bank tower, pictured at far left.

## MTA receives rival bid for Atlantic Yards

By Jess Wisloski  
*The Brooklyn Papers*

At first glance, the May 24 issuance of a request for proposals by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority for the development rights over the site of the Atlantic Yards train tracks seemed a mere formality.

After all, officials of real estate development company Forest City Ratner, and that company's principal owner Bruce Ratner, had spent the past year and a half in discussions with the MTA for the rights to build a professional basketball arena and 17 residential and office buildings, including 800 apartments over the Long Island Rail Road storage yards east of Flatbush Avenue in a development that would also include private property south of those train tracks.

So it was inevitable that the rival bid submitted by a Manhattan-based developer for the Atlantic Yards site just before the July 6 deadline would turn some heads, to say the least.

Exell Development Company, which recently purchased 77 acres of Upper West Side property from Donald Trump

### NEWS ANALYSIS

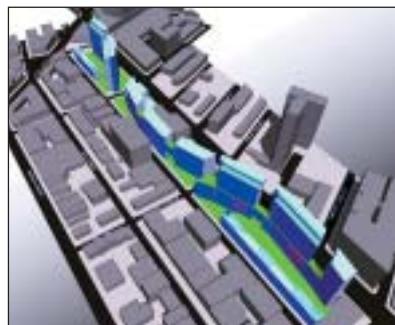
and his partners for \$1.8 billion, insisted he was scrupulous in his motivations last week that the bid was legitimate, earnest and sincere.

The Exell plan proposes 11 buildings, as opposed to Ratner's 17. The tallest would be 28 stories, whereas the Ratner plan's tallest peaks at 60 stories, dwarfing the iconic Williamsburgh Savings Bank tower.

With 1,940 residential units and 116,000 square feet of office space, Exell's proposal pales in size to Ratner's looming, Frank Gehry-designed towers, part of a plan that also includes 1.9 million square feet of office space, and a 19,000-seat arena for Ratner's New Jersey Nets NBA team.

Exell's proposal also boasts some of the same community-centric ethos that Ratner's company touted at the signing on June 27 of a minority benefits agreement, or CBA, witnessed by Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

The Exell design, by Brooklyn architects CetraRuddy, snakes in waves across the three MTA blocks "like a train," as described by principal owner Gary Barnett.



Exell Development Company's plan for the railyards along Atlantic Avenue is considerably smaller than the plan proposed by Bruce Ratner.

## Study calls Atlantic Ave subway-LIRR complex prime spot for attack

By Jess Wisloski  
*The Brooklyn Papers*

Less than a week after a terrorist attack on the underground subway system in London left more than 52 dead and 700 injured, a document examining the vulnerability of a once and potentially future target in Brooklyn has been released.

The Brooklyn Papers was given a first look at the study by Bruce Ratner, chairman of the New York City-based Ferromart Security and the Proposed Brooklyn Atlantic Yards High Rise and Arena Development Project. "The study examines safety and terrorism concerns involving developer Bruce Ratner's plan, issues that have been raised at community meetings on the proposed project over the past year."

The report was completed July 6, a day

### EXCLUSIVE

before the attacks in London. It addresses an overriding concern about any major development near the Atlantic Terminal transit hub that includes major subway stations and the Long Island Rail Road, both of which Atlantic Avenue, and countless residents in the area could be an effective target for terrorists.

The report includes an account of the 1997 planned bombing of the hub by terrorists operating out of a Park Slope apartment just blocks away.

The most chilling reference of the report comes from the book "Jihad in Brooklyn," by Samuel M. Katz, who wrote about the effect.

See **ATLANTIC TERROR** on page 5

Exell's agreement is less specific in detailing its oversight structure and beneficiaries, but it commits Barnett's company in ways not envisioned under the Ratner plan: it promises to disavow the taking of private property through eminent domain and to voluntarily put its proposal through the city's Uniform Land Use Review Process (ULURP).

Ratner's plan is excluded from ULURP, which is the most stringent review process in the state.

Exell has also promised to comply with contextual zoning regulations for the surrounding area, not exceed a 6.0 density ratio and to build a closed public streets, partner with local housing advocates, guarantee 30 percent of the affordable housing units are owner-occupied, guarantee 20 percent of all construction work to minority and women-owned contractors and provide job training programs.

Ratner's CBA promised certain amenities to local residents, such as active roles in oversight of job development, job training, and made commitments regarding construction work for minorities (35 percent) and women (10 percent) and the placement of public housing residents.

It's something we thought we could live with," said Barnett of the agreement.

See **COMPETITION** on page 5

# Wal-Mart's thinking outside the big box

By Jess Wisloski  
*The Brooklyn Papers*

National discount retailer Wal-Mart is so interested in opening a store in New York City, and specifically Brooklyn, they're willing to change their big-box-store image, executives said at a June 30

meeting with Brooklyn reporters.

Company executives and their public relations representatives met reporters at the New York Marriott Broome on Main Street not far from the proposed New York City site, although they conceded that their local press outside had not exceeded beyond Brooklyn — but to discuss what an urban Wal-Mart

might look like, and what competitors have taught them about this borough's "urban market."

"Each project is different," said Mia Masten, Wal-Mart's communications director. "If we can't have it on a single story, we can do a tiered structure," she said. "There isn't an urban prototype per se, but it would have to be feasible for an urban market."

A deal to build a Wal-Mart in Rego Park, Queens, fell through earlier this year the company began eyeing Brooklyn, among other things.

"Population alone is huge; we know that there are other retailers doing well here," said Masten. "We want a Wal-Mart," she said. A study commissioned by the Marino Organization, the public relations firm representing the company, that study claims that 67 percent of Brooklynites would support the opening of a Wal-Mart in the borough. The survey interviewed 2,400 people between Feb. 28 and March 1 of this year.

As part of the company's efforts to soften its image in the face of criticism, largely from labor unions, of its wage structure and other employment practices, Wal-Mart has adopted apparently more friendly policies, especially to their environment, Masten said.

"We've gone past the old 'battlefield blue' style, and now accommodate nationwide," said Masten. "Say, if it's going to be in a rural setting, we'll do like a mountain resort with an Adirondack look to it. In Main Street, it will be more modernized," she said, and pointed towards an in-process renovation in White Plains, N.Y., where a Wal-Mart is being developed in a former Sears department

See **WAL-MART** on page 6



## Chowhounds

The hot dogs didn't stand a chance when some of the world's top competitive eaters descended on Coney Island July 4 for Nathan's Famous' annual Hot Dog Eating Contest. (Left to right) American title holder Sonya Thomas, world champion Takeru Kobayashi and Eric "Badlands" Booker all knocked back a lot of dogs, but perpetual champ Kobayashi retained his Mustard-Yellow Belt.



## Night and day

Fourth of July fireworks light up the sky above the Brooklyn Bridge during Macy's fireworks extravaganza (above). Below, the ocean and beach at Coney Island seemed filled to capacity earlier that day.





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# Grand in jewels lifted from bank

By Lilo Stainton  
The Brooklyn Papers

Thieves snatched a bag holding more than \$1,000 in jewelry from a woman inside a Montague Street bank on the afternoon of June 7, the woman told police.

The Brooklyn Heights woman, 36, said the gift was grabbed around 2:20 pm when she set the bag down on a table while preparing her bank transaction. The victim told police the official at the bank, a Citibank teller, refused to let her view the security tape without a police report or court order.

She said the bag contained a pair of turquoise earnings valued at \$250, gold and emerald earrings valued at \$200, a silver necklace valued at \$150, two gold necklaces and a pair of gold medallions with an image of the Virgin Mary, valued at \$400 together, and three coral earnings valued at \$100.

#### DUMBO break-ins

A Brooklyn prosecutor hunting lunch at a Montague Street diner had her pocketbook — containing her badge — grabbed from the back of her chair on June 30.

The 34-year-old victim told police she was dining with a friend at the restaurant, located between Hicks and Henry streets, around 1:15 pm. When she went to pay the bill, she noticed the bag was gone.

The 34-year-old business owner told Brooklyn police her office was broken into on July 24. When she returned at 9:30 am on June 27, she noticed the office door had been jimmied and found plaster chunks on the floor.

The woman said desk drawers had been opened and a Sony digital camera, worth \$500, and an Apple G4 laptop, valued at \$2,769, was missing.

The burglar was just one of a recent string of robberies at the office building of Front St. But police from the 84th Precinct, who have had the office under surveillance, believe they may have caught a number of those robbers.

On June 28, police from the 84th Precinct arrested a 43-year-old Fort Greene man,

## POLICE BLOTTER

who they found lurking around the building at 10:30 pm.

Police said they are working to link him to the string of burglaries.

The man was arraigned on July 7 and charged with criminal trespassing, according to the district attorney's office. He is due back in court on Aug. 1.

#### Lawyer robbed

A Brooklyn prosecutor hunting lunch at a Montague Street diner had her pocketbook — containing her badge — grabbed from the back of her chair on June 30.

The 34-year-old victim told police she was dining with a friend at the restaurant, located between Hicks and Henry streets, around 1:15 pm. When she went to pay the bill, she noticed the bag was gone.

The purse contained an assistant district attorney's badge, cell phone, various bank and credit cards, health care identification card, her Social Security card, a membership card for the American Bar Association, paperwork from the Kings County District Attorney's office and \$25 in cash.

#### York St. mug

A Manhattan woman was robbed at gunpoint the night of July 9 after leaving the York Street F-train subway station.

According to police, the woman was walking along York Street, near Jay Street, at 9:25 pm, when she saw a man lingering at the corner of Bridge and Front streets.

She told police the man followed her until, when she reached Hudson Avenue, displayed a black handgun. "Give me your wallet," he demanded.

The woman said she turned over her purse, which contained her car phone, three credit cards, a driver's license, house keys, \$30 in cash and a

pair of Amtrak train tickets valued at \$140.

She described her attacker as a black man, about 5-foot-7 and 160 pounds, dressed in a white shirt and hat.

#### Severin snagged

Robbers hit a DUMBO laboratory over the Independence Day weekend, making off with computer equipment and credits.

A worker at 11 Front Street, told police the facility was closed from 8 pm on July 2 until 11 am on July 5.

When employees returned after the holiday break, they found a window was open and an Apple G3 computer tower, an external hard drive and two credit cards were taken.

#### Daytime grab

The day snatched a woman's pocketbook the afternoon of July 6 as she walked down Fulton Street.

The victim, 56, told police she was strolling eastbound, toward Nevins Street, at 4 pm when a group of three women shooed her to the ground from behind, grabbed her pocketbook and fled.

She told police the purse contained \$300 in cash, welfare and other benefit cards, her debit card, and was unable to describe her attackers.

#### Fighting words

An early-morning argument between two young men at Bond and Schermerhorn streets grew violent when one pulled a knife.

The 20-year-old victim, who was with a 20-year-old friend at the time of the fight, was treated at Brooklyn Hospital Center for slash wounds after the man with whom he was fighting pulled out a switchblade and cut him on the upper right arm.

The incident took place around 1:30 am on July 9.

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# Purse-snatchers are targeting Macy's john

By Lilo H. Stanton  
The Brooklyn Papers

Three women had their purses snatched from the Macy's department store at the Fulton Mall recently, with two victims hit within hours of each other on July 8.

A spokeswoman for the Macy's Fulton department store chain, Elina Koren, said the company has been made aware of robberies at the Fulton Mall location.

"Our store is surrounded by security personnel, both uniformed and plainclothes, to ensure customer and associates safety, as well as safeguard personal belongings. We are working with local law enforcement in their efforts to prevent future occurrences at our downtown Brooklyn store," Koren said in a written statement.

A 49-year-old woman told police that when she used the department store's bathroom at

3:15 p.m. on July 8, she hung her pocketbook on the hook inside the stall door. As she was leaving, she realized the purse was missing.

Less than an hour later, trans-

ports found her wallet on the A train; her pocketbook was soon recovered on Jay Street. The victim said the only items missing were a cell phone, house keys and a credit card that had been

used to charge \$10 worth of items at a nearby shop.

At 6 p.m. that day, a 54-year-old victim suffered a similar fate. The woman told police that her purse was also snatched from the hook inside the stall door as she used the bathroom.

But this victim was not lucky enough to get her belongings back. She told police she lost multiple credit cards, her debit card, work permit, health insurance cards, a driver's license, her cell phone, house keys and eyeglasses.

The bathroom doors have been checked since, too.

On July 28, a 71-year-old woman told police her bag was grabbed from the third-floor restroom around noon. As with the later robberies, the purse was left hanging on the back of the stall door.

The victim told police her purse contained \$127, credit and debit cards, her non-driver identification card, a MetroCard, keys and an umbrella.

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## NY1's 'Road' leads to Brooklyn Heights

The Brooklyn Papers

Cable news channel NY1 brings its "The Road To City Hall" show to St. Francis College in Brooklyn Heights on Wednesday, July 20. The special two-hour program will broadcast live from the school's campus at 141 Livingston Street, between Court and Clinton Streets.

Special guests will include Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott, Deputy Schools Chancellor Carmen Farina, Brooklyn District Attorney Charles Hynes, City Councilwoman Letitia James and Mafuzra Khan of the Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development.

Topics will include education, crime, and the Atlantic Rail Yards project. To reserve free tickets for the event, call (718) 489-5272.

### LEGAL NOTICE

State University of New York, Notice to Bidders: The State University of New York Downstate Medical Center will receive sealed bids for the construction of a new Titled Paint Shop Replacement until 2:00 p.m. Local Time on July 29, 2005 at 405 Clarkson Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11203, where such proposals will be publicly opened and read at 2:30 p.m. Local Time. Construction of office space and storage space is needed for the basic Sciences Building to the Penitentiary. The construction will include the removal of existing mechanical modifications such as heat and air conditioning, electrical, water and sewer and contains heating is required. All work on this Contract is to be completed within 120 calendar days of the date of award. Bids must be submitted within 10 days after the contract approval date of the New York State Department of General Services, Procurement Division, Contract Documents may be examined by request of the New York State Department of General Services, Procurement Division, PMDO Office - Room 1-15, Basic Sciences Building, Site (SUNY Campus), 405 Clarkson Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11203, or by mail to: Contract Documents for bidding may be obtained from U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, Washington, DC 20402, Room 200, (202) 720-5209, or the Contracting Officer, Contract Documents, Finance Law, Room 9-1, i.e., Brown's Letter, Inc., 224-240 Clarkos Street, Brooklyn, NY 11203. Requests for documents shall be made to the Contracting Officer.

Notice to Bidders: The State University of New York Downstate Medical Center, 405 Clarkson Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11203, invites bids for the construction of a new Titled Paint Shop Replacement of office space and storage space is needed for the basic Sciences Building to the Penitentiary. The construction will include the removal of existing mechanical modifications such as heat and air conditioning, electrical, water and sewer and contains heating is required. All work on this Contract is to be completed within 120 calendar days of the date of award. Bids must be submitted within 10 days after the contract approval date of the New York State Department of General Services, Procurement Division, Contract Documents may be examined by request of the New York State Department of General Services, Procurement Division, PMDO Office - Room 1-15, Basic Sciences Building, Site (SUNY Campus), 405 Clarkson Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11203, or by mail to: Contract Documents for bidding may be obtained from U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, Washington, DC 20402, Room 200, (202) 720-5209, or the Contracting Officer, Contract Documents, Finance Law, Room 9-1, i.e., Brown's Letter, Inc., 224-240 Clarkos Street, Brooklyn, NY 11203. Requests for documents shall be made to the Contracting Officer.

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The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations will conduct an unannounced accreditation survey at the Ambulatory Surgery Center of Brooklyn within the next 45 days.

The purpose of the survey will be to evaluate the organization's compliance with nationally established Joint Commission standards. The survey results will be used to determine whether, and the conditions under which, accreditation should be awarded the organization.

Joint Commission standards deal with organization quality, safety of care issues, and the safety of the environment in which the care is provided. Anyone believing that he or she has pertinent and valid information about such matters may request a public information interview with the Joint Commission field representative at the time of the survey. Information presented at the interview will be carefully evaluated for relevance to the accreditation process. Requests for a public information interview must be made in writing and should be sent to the Joint Commission no later than five working days before the survey begins. The request should be addressed to:

Division of Accreditation Operations  
Office of Quality Monitoring  
Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations  
One Renaissance Boulevard  
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

or

Faxed to (630) 792-5636

Or

E-mailed to [complaint@jcaho.org](mailto:complaint@jcaho.org)

The Joint Commission Office of Quality Monitoring will acknowledge in writing or by telephone requests received 10 days before the survey begins. An Account Representative will contact the individual requesting the public information interview prior to survey, indicating the location, date, and time of the interview and the name of the surveyor who will conduct the interview.

The notice is posted in accordance with the Joint Commission's requirements and may not be removed before the survey is complete.

Date Posted: June 30, 2005.

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# Competition at Atlantic Yards...

*Continued from page 1*

## Using the yards

Unlike the Ratner plan, Barnett's plan does not require relocation of the rail yard. Instead, the plan would expect to get the \$200 million in city and state infrastructure that has been offered to Forest City Ratner by the mayor and governor since a platform was needed to be built over the rail yards.

"Certain parts of the site will need the platform," Barnett told The Brooklyn Papers this week. "We're not asking the MTA to fund any of those improvements." The rail yards are owned by the city, he said. Our understanding is that the city and the state both have appropriated money for that; our understanding is that it is not exclusive to any one developer.

"Other than that we don't anticipate any other subsidies than the incentives for the inclusion for affordable housing," he said.

But while Barnett offered his bid at the same time as Forest City Ratner, Ratner has nearly two years of prep work behind him.

For starters, he already owns a substantial swath of property in the area. And Ratner enjoys the working support of Gov. George Pataki, who staffs most of the MTA board, and Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

Even the MTA request for

proposals seemed tailor-made to Ratner, stating that the "City of New York's proposed Atlantic Terminal Urban Renewal Area developer has proposed a high density mixed-use project for the site and surrounding parcels including an arena."

## Arena allies

Only a day after Extell's bid was submitted, it was saluted by Borough President Marty Markowitz, whose dream of bringing an NBA team to Brooklyn — to restore some of the local sports glory taken away by the Brooklyn Dodgers — had come true.

The team fled for Los Angeles after the 1957 season — has been acknowledged as a catalyst for the creation of Ratner's plan.

It has been a cheerleader for Ratner's plan since it was announced in late 2003.

"The Extell proposal may benefit the small number of people who are opposed to the Ratner plan, but it certainly doesn't make me feel better," commented Markowitz in a prepared statement.

"Where's the affordable housing? Where's the job opportunity for the community?" he said.

"I've always said that competing proposals are welcome for the rail yards site and it is certainly a healthy thing that another bid has been put forth," the statement continued.

used. "I expect the MTA to make the best possible compensation package for the rail yards," he said. That deal should produce significant tax revenue, jobs and housing. It should also include an arena.

"Extell's proposal appears to provide more affordable housing," he said.

"It does not include an arena and lacks the significant job training and job creation of [Forest City Ratner's] bid."

Barnett called Markowitz's may saying unfounded.

"I'm not sure why he thinks it's not beneficial to greater Brooklyn," he said. "What is the matter with a moderate and substantial project that re-

uses and modifies two neighborhoods?"

"So his thinking is that if there was an arena, he would support our project?" Barnett wondered, pointing out that a project should be based on what it brings into a community.

Barnett added that his project would include a school near where the arena is planned under Ratner's plan, an idea he said was well received.

He asked whether his project would include a school near where the arena is planned under Ratner's plan, an idea he said was well received.

"It does not include an arena and lacks the significant job training and job creation of [Forest City Ratner's] bid."

Barnett called Markowitz's may saying unfounded.

"I'm not sure why he thinks it's not beneficial to greater Brooklyn," he said. "What is the matter with a moderate and substantial project that re-

cates whether there should be an arena or shouldn't be an arena and how to have the support of the borough president?" Barnett added, noting that an arena was not out of the question under his plan.

"I think perhaps a solution could be found if everybody wants to have an arena," he said.

## All aboard

Asked for the dollar-value of his bid, Barnett said he would not disclose the amount of respect to the MTA, but said he would like to see the agency put the information out there.

"We would be certain not if the MTA were to release all

information about the various bids," he said.

Both executives agreed. "We will share information about the bid once it is presented to the board," said Joe DePlasco, a spokesman for Forest City Ratner, who touted the community benefits agreement as representing a broad coalition of community residents.

Still, anti-Ratner-plan community organizations turned out July 10 on the steps of City Hall, along with Councilman Alan Maisel, state Sen. Vito Lopez, Assemblyman Michael G. Carroll and Congresswoman Major Owens to offer their support, unsolicited, to the Extell bid.

"We, the people, say these are our streets," said James.

"We, the people, say this is our community, and that represents us is a plan that doesn't involve eminent domain."

The MTA board could make a decision as soon as its July 27 monthly meeting, but does not have a deadline.

## ATLANTIC TERROR...

*Continued from page 1*

acute thwarting by police and detectives of the 84th Precinct of a terrorist plan to pipe-bomb an Atlantic Yards train.

"Built-in design flaws" of the Ratner buildings — designed by noted architect Frank Gehry — include "a perimeter of high-rise towers surrounding an open central green space with a first floor entrance to the entire 24-acre complex," according to the report, which was based on recent overhead renderings released by Forest City Ratner, the developer's company. It also includes ground parking in the plan as an attraction to terrorist bomb plotters.

The concerns about lack of building setbacks in the report have led to demands that building sidewalks in such close proximity serve as "maximizing the blast effects of any car or truck bomb passing by," stating the result could be "widespread physical destruction and loss of life."

Officials with Forest City Ratner, including Executive Vice President Bruce Bender, said the current design for a 19,000-seat arena directly over the largest transportation hub in Brooklyn, the At-

lantic Terminal — which is in close proximity to three elevated expressways and connects to the commercial Long Island Rail Road — came as the result of amending earlier concepts the company had of building an elevated arena that would arch over property adjacent to the proposed site of Ratner to create a gateway between their existing Atlantic Center mall, Atlantic Terminal mall and Fallon Park on the other side of Atlantic Avenue.

Bender explained they were asked from that design after an expert showed them how a truck bomb could blow up the entire structure if it drove underneath the overhead platform.

Forest City Ratner's spokesman declined to comment for this article.

The report was solicited by members of the local community and developed Don't Desecrate Brooklyn, a neighborhood group formed in opposition to Ratner's plan to build a professional basketball arena and 17 high-rises, some of them skyscrapers, on a swath of Prospect Heights that emanates from the intersection of Atlantic and Flatbush avenues.

Community members commissioned Christina Cope, an environmental policy analyst for the Department of Environmental Conservation, Alan Rosner, a Prospect Heights resident, who is a retired strategic and business analyst for Metro-North. Rosner is also a member of DDDB.

Considering a series of likely and admittedly not-so-likely scenarios, the eight-page report outlines issues raised by the arena's proximity to the major transportation hub; "critical land transportation route" of the three north-south railroads of Fourth, Flushing and Atlantic avenues; intention to have large-scale events there; and lack of set-backs of buildings from the streets.

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# Eminent domain fight

By Jess Wisloski  
The Brooklyn Papers

In response to the Supreme Court's recent landmark decision that allows governments to take private property in the name of economic development, bills are gaining momentum in both the House of Representatives and U.S. Senate that would bar federal tax dollars from being used for projects that employ eminent domain.

The legislation could affect affordable housing, transportation and development. Bruce Ratner's proposed Atlantic Yards plan, which proposes to build a 19,000-seat basketball arena and 17-tower office and residential complex at the intersection of Flatbush and Atlantic avenues, and which threatens the use of eminent domain for up to 13 acres of private property.

Ratner and his major supporters, who include the state and city governments, believe the massive development would bring in new tax revenues for the public good, although Ratner executives have long claimed that the area of Prospect Heights where they want to build is blighted, and therefore qualifies for eminent domain regardless of the Supreme Court ruling.

On June 30, conservative-leaning Republicans in the House responded in force to the Supreme Court's ruling and Ratner in a memorandum of understanding, officials from the Housing Development Corporation, a city housing fund that finances development projects, committed \$67.5 million in subsidies. An article this week in the New

York Times reported that the Brooklyn Farmers' Market, which was led by the high court's liberal voices, Ninety-three congressmen thus far have co-sponsored the Private Property Rights Protection Act of 2005 — drafted by Rep. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., of Wisconsin — which

represents a "substantial" portion of the bill.

Rep. Edolphus Towns, D-N.Y., and Ratner, who are from the same congressional district, have also co-sponsored the bill to "assure the American people that we will not allow churches, homes, farms and other private property to be征用ed in abusive land grabs that solely benefit wealthy individuals."

The bill defines "economic development" as any activity

"including increased tax revenue" that does not involve using the seized property in a "substantial" part for public use.

The bill could stifle federal funding for local and state developing corporations seeking incentives such as tax breaks, tax abatements, subsidies and grants if they put forth projects that required the condemnation of private land.

As reported by the Brooklyn

Papers following a May 19 congressional hearing, Towns and Ratner in a memorandum

of understanding, officials from the Housing Development Corporation, a city housing fund that finances development projects, committed \$67.5 million in subsidies. An article this week in the New

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represents a "substantial" portion of the bill.

"He didn't like what the Supreme Court justices did," Johnson said, but mentioned the affinity of Sensenbrenner to far-righting causes, and feared the bill might have ulterior motives. "There might be better bills that will be drafted [of the same ilk]," she added.

Rep. Vito Fossella, a Bay Ridge-Staten Island Republican who thus far is the lone member of New York City's congressional delegation to co-sponsor the bill, this week told The Brooklyn Papers, "What the Supreme Court took away in our Constitutional rights, the Congress must now restore."

We must slam the brakes on any attempt by government to seize our homes and small businesses for private developers to build hotels, supermarkets or office buildings."

Neither Rep. Nydia Velazquez nor Rep. Major Owens

would forbid allocation of federal funds, many of which go to state and local municipalities for development incentives, to be used for any project employing eminent domain.

The Housing Development Corporation (HDC) would be exempt from the condemnation of the proposed production-income units, financing up to \$45,000 a unit to subsidize their construction, said HDC's commissioner, Shaun Donovan.

Former City Councilman Bruce Ratner did not return calls seeking comment for this article.

At the Judiciary Committee's June 30 hearing, Sensenbrenner, the bill's sponsor, said that "a state property may now be taken for the benefit of another private party."

"Government now has license to transfer property from those with fewer resources to those with more. That is a situation we have intended this perverse result," Sensenbrenner said.

"American taxpayers should not be forced to contribute in any way to the abuse of government power," he said. "I am co-sponsoring the bill to 'assure the American people that we will not allow churches, homes, farms and other private property to be征用ed in abusive land grabs that solely benefit wealthy individuals.'

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suburban town of a state should

not be征用ed in any way to

increase tax revenue," he said.

Karen Johnson, a spokeswoman for Brooklyn Rep. Edolphus Towns, said that although the Democratic was opposed to the Supreme Court's ruling, he hadn't yet looked at the bill.

"He didn't like what the Supreme Court justices did," Johnson said, but mentioned the affinity of Sensenbrenner to far-righting causes, and feared the bill might have ulterior motives. "There might be better bills that will be drafted [of the same ilk]," she added.

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Neither Rep. Nydia Velazquez nor Rep. Major Owens

turned calls for comment by press time, but Owens has taken a strong position against the Ratner plan and its reliance on eminent domain.

"My thing is this — if the bill broadly talks about economic development, I would oppose it," he said. "I believe in doing a broad brush like that," said Chris Owens, the congressman's son and chief aide.

Former City Councilman Bruce Ratner did not return calls seeking comment for this article.

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## Alternatives Analysis/Environmental Impact Statement (AA/EIS) Improved Access Between Lower Manhattan, Jamaica Station and JFK International Airport

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the lead agency, in cooperation with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), is issuing a Notice of Intent to advise the public that the FTA intends to prepare an AA/EIS to evaluate alternatives that provide improved access between Lower Manhattan, the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) Jamaica Station in Queens, and JFK International Airport.

The Project Area is roughly defined by a four-mile travel corridor between the transportation hubs of Lower Manhattan, the Jamaica LIRR/J-Train/JFK complex in Queens and John F. Kennedy International Airport. This area is served by the Long Island Rail Road Atlantic Branch, the Atlantic Avenue aerial road, and the NYCT Fulton Street Subway. The LIRR train line connects to the Port Authority Bus Terminal and the bus hubs in the Downtown Brooklyn and Fort Greene, Bedford-Stuyvesant, East New York, Woodhaven, Ozone Park and Howard Beach. In addition, commuters from communities in Eastern Queens, and Nassau and Suffolk Counties travel through the project area to their places of employment in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Brooklyn.

FTA, MTA, NYPA, and LMC seek public input on the scope of the EIS for this project, including the alternatives to be considered and the environmental and community impacts to be evaluated, considering all feasible rail and non-rail transportation alternatives that will improve travel in the corridor.

The EIS is being prepared under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and applicable implementing regulations to ensure that the EIS and the environmental review process satisfy the requirements of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), as may be applicable.

The EIS will evaluate a No Action Alternative, one or more Build Alternatives, and any additional alternatives generated during the planning process through meetings and correspondence with interested parties, groups, and government agencies.

Date, Time & Location of the Meetings:

Monday, July 18, 2005, starting at 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Tuesday, July 19, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Wednesday, July 20, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Thursday, July 21, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Friday, July 22, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Saturday, July 23, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Sunday, July 24, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Monday, July 25, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Tuesday, July 26, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Wednesday, July 27, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Thursday, July 28, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Friday, July 29, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Saturday, July 30, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Sunday, July 31, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Monday, August 1, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Tuesday, August 2, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Wednesday, August 3, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Thursday, August 4, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Friday, August 5, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Saturday, August 6, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Sunday, August 7, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Monday, August 8, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Tuesday, August 9, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Wednesday, August 10, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Thursday, August 11, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Friday, August 12, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Saturday, August 13, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Sunday, August 14, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Monday, August 15, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Tuesday, August 16, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Wednesday, August 17, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Thursday, August 18, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

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Thursday, September 1, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

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Thursday, September 29, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Friday, September 30, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Saturday, October 1, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Sunday, October 2, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Monday, October 3, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Tuesday, October 4, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Wednesday, October 5, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

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Tuesday, October 11, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Wednesday, October 12, 2005, starting at 4 p.m.

Thursday, October 13, 2005, starting at



# BROOKLYN Bites

## Neighborhood Dining Guide

This week:  
**SMITH STREET**

### Baluchi's Indian Food

263 Smith St. at Degraw Street, (718) 797-0707 (AmEx, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrées: \$5.95-\$30.95. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Located in Brooklyn, in January 2003. While owner Rakesh Bhambhani may seem relatively new to Brooklyn and Queens expanded into its third borough, Baluchi's has been around since 1986. In addition to Bhambhani's signature eggplant cooked with onions and peas, the Baluchi's menu also offers chicken, lamb and seafood specialties. The Goan curry, however, comes with sautéed orange juice, "secret spices" and fresh coconut milk, one of the lunch special offerings.



Chicken, steamed broccoli and peanut sauce at Baluchi's Indian Food.

The lunch special offers 50 percent off their in-house menu from noon to 3 pm daily, and also offers an appetizer and entree combo menu for \$12.95. Delivery available. Open daily for lunch and dinner.

### Bar Tabac

128 Smith St. at Dean Street, (718) 923-0918 (AmEx) Entrées: \$12.95-\$17.95.

Look for the bright red-and-white sign of a French bistro to find this French bistro offering a spacious dining room (big enough for a football table) by the entrance. Brothers Alan and Jim Hardsing have been here since 2001 with a dinner menu featuring shell steak, tuna steak, salmon, lamb shanks and mussels. Top off with a dessert like "Bûche de Noël" or "Tiramisu." The lunch special offers 50 percent off their in-house menu from noon to 3 pm daily, and also offers an appetizer and entree combo menu for \$12.95. Delivery available. Open daily for lunch and dinner.

Entree, each dinner box is served with rice, miso soup, green salad, three pieces of sushi, a choice of two pieces of tempura (Japanese-style shrimp dumplings). The list of special rolls on the menu is equally intriguing: "Spicy Out," "Spicy Gyoza," "Spicy Shrimp" and "Spicy 'n' Roll." Their lunch special price is \$20.95 per person, and it's available all day, every day. Sidewalk seating available. Open daily for lunch and dinner.

### Patisos

263 Smith St. at Douglass Street, (718) 855-2328 (AmEx, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrée: \$14-\$19. This pioneering French bistro began by Alan Harding and Brothers Paul and Jim Mamay when they first opened in Carroll Gardens in 1997. One year later, it was even papered in French newspaper clippings. Two doors down, after passing a charming French bakery and deli named "Le Pain," Chef Chefs Stateman's signature dishes include gnocchi with puffed pastry, steamed fish with a touch of Monaco (grapefruit, Spritz and beer) or Tandoori chicken with a side of naan. Delivery available. Open Monday through Wednesday for lunch and dinner; Saturday for brunch as well as on Monday and Friday. Open daily. Closed Mondays.

**Caserta Vecchia**

221 Smith St. at Baltic Street, (718) 624-7549, www.caserotecchia.com (MC, Visa) Entrées: \$14-\$24.

Local pride: Caserta Vecchia — for the name, ancestral home near Naples — offers authentic Southern Italian specialities in addition to their 20 different types on breads and pastas. The menu includes a variety of the distinct and nontraditional Nutella-and-peas. Pasta escapes the usual confines of red sauce, and includes farfalle like "farfalle con salsiccia" with a touch of meat and pasta primavera. Their \$20 price-fixe three-course sunset supper menu changes daily and is available from 5 pm to 9 pm. There's also a two-course, \$9 prix fixe lunch menu, available Monday through Thursday for dinner, and Friday through Sunday for lunch and dinner. Closed Mondays.

### Cool

191 Smith St. at Warren Street, (347) 643-1053 (AmEx, DC, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrées: \$10-\$20.

Chef Ignacio Vazquez, a native of Ireland and American dishes in Cool (pronounced KOOL) previously called Smithworks. Among the dishes is a \$10.95 paella and \$12.95 paella with meat and pasta primavera. The \$20 price-fixe three-course sunset supper menu changes daily and is available from 5 pm to 9 pm. There's also a two-course, \$9 prix fixe lunch menu, available Monday through Thursday for dinner, and Friday through Sunday for lunch and dinner. Closed Mondays.

### Hana Cafe

235 Smith St. at Butler Street, (718) 643-1963 (or 718) 643-1575 (AmEx, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrées: \$10.95-\$19.95.

Hana Cafe is for Japanese-food lovers. Teriyaki, ramen, udon and sushi are just some of the items on the menu. For \$19.95, Hana offers 12 dinner special combination boxes. In addition to the

usual fare, Hana also serves authentic Thai food. The food is simple, familiar dishes in an unpretentious atmosphere. The appetizers are fried calamari and chicken wings. For entrées, GO Brooklyn dining critic Tina Weinstock rates the menu "meh." She writes, "It's not the most interesting place in town, but it's a solid choice for a casual meal." Delivery available. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Brunch is served from 9:30 am to 4 pm on weekends. Kids' menu is available.

### Sonny's Bar & Grill

305 Smith St. at Union Street, (718) 643-3293 (AmEx, DC, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrées: \$26-\$30.

Carroll Gardens' own Carroll Gardens stretch of Smith Street in February 2004. The restaurant offers simple, familiar dishes in an unpretentious atmosphere. The appetizers are fried calamari and chicken wings. For entrées, GO Brooklyn dining critic Tina Weinstock rates the menu "meh." She writes, "It's not the most interesting place in town, but it's a solid choice for a casual meal." Delivery available. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Brunch is served from 9:30 am to 4 pm on weekends. Kids' menu is available.

### Tuk Tuk

204 Smith St. at Baltic Street, (718) 222-5598 (AmEx, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrées: \$8-\$17.

Reopened after renovations, Tuk Tuk serves up authentic Thai food. The cozy restaurant, which seats about 45 people, is named for the ubiquitous tuk-tuk, the motorized tricycle that's a mainstay in Thailand. It's also known for its spicy baked duck with a chili basil flavor. Delivery available. Tuk Tuk has live music, a bar, and a happy hour from 5 pm to 11 pm. Open daily for lunch and dinner.

**Editor's note:** These are a sampling of restaurants in the neighborhood. Not all are listed, and it is not comprehensive. For more restaurants, go to [www.brooklynpapers.com](http://www.brooklynpapers.com) on the Web. If your restaurant is not listed and you'd like it to be, please contact Brooklyn Editor Lisa Curtis via e-mail at [Curtis@brooklynpapers.com](mailto:Curtis@brooklynpapers.com).

\* = Full review available at



Abbreviation Key: AmEx = American Express; DC = Diner's Club; Disc = Discover Card; MC = MasterCard; Visa = Visa Card



# Hot plates

**Catering biz serves Backstreet Boys and other celebs from Carroll Gardens' back streets**

By Ajla Grozdanic  
For The Brooklyn Papers

You know you've succeeded in the catering business when the rich and famous are feasting on your spreads.

So when Backstreet Boy Nick Carter asked for more tuxedo chicken — fried chicken nuggets covered in black and white sesame seeds and served with honey mustard sauce — Bruce Kessler, owner of Brooklyn-based catering company, knew he had created a hit menu.

Famous clients like the Backstreet Boys event at Manhattan's trendy penthouse, where Kessler's catering world seems larger than life.

Open since September, Julieenne Catering is the Carroll Gardens branch of Kessler's Manhattan-based, 6-year-old CEO (Catering and Event Organization) Group. Julieenne's bread-and-butter comes from catering three or four times a week at various types of venues, particularly A-list parties and concerts. Past events have included parties for actress Grace Jones and pop star Madonna.

Up until recently, Kessler's catering company came from catering three or four times a week at various types of venues, particularly A-list parties and concerts. Past events have included parties for actress Grace Jones and pop star Madonna.

"It's hard to start a business in an identical neighborhood," Kessler told GO Brooklyn. "The core of my business is corporate entertainment."

Although Julieenne is nestled in Carroll Gardens, the neighborhood's brick townhouses, its bright orange-and-blue color scheme, peeking out from the corner of Clinton and Nolson streets, gives it away. The colorful sign and awning let you know that you have found the right place — and not just somebody's cheerfully decorated front yard.

But in addition to being a catering company, Kessler's new Clinton Street post is also a cafe in the making. At the moment, there's no indoor seating, but the restaurant's front porch, which can squeeze in 10 guests, is open to the public during the summer months.

The bright-blue swing chair is a crowd favorite. Mothers with newborns love it.

"Mothers with newborns love it," said Kessler of the vintage metal swing, which, he said, he found three blocks away.

With mismatched, worn-out tables and chairs, and the blue carpet underneath, are put together in a way that gives the bright and sunny patio a trendy, artsy vibe that's cozy, too.

"I want to have a SoHo feel and bring it to Brooklyn while maintaining a neighborhood atmosphere," said the owner.

Things weren't always so bright and sunny for Kessler. His catering business, which was once located blocks away from the World Trade Center, suffered a major setback when the 150,000 and \$200,000 in revenue following the events of Sept. 11, 2001, were estimated.

Upon receiving long-awaited government aid, Kessler moved to 580 Broadway in SoHo, then moved to the Brooklyn location and turning the Manhattan office into an event-planning company.

He named his catering company and cat after his girlfriend's 7-year-old son, Julian. He modified the name into a Julieenne after meeting her mother at the "end" at the end. (To date, we've never seen a tuxedo shirt made from tiny stalks.)

Relaxing in Julieenne's front garden with soothing jazz tunes in the background — Kessler's current music of choice — while nibbling on a fresh salad or a tasty sandwich, makes for a perfect afternoon. And every Sunday from 1 pm to 4 pm, a jazz guitarist, Shogo Kubo, provides live entertainment.

Kessler's focus is on serving foods he loves: Julieenne's new Clinton Street cafe is also a cafe in the making. At the moment, there's no indoor seating, but the restaurant's front porch, which can squeeze in 10 guests, is open to the public during the summer months.

but he had sandwiches, salads, quesadillas, and specialties like the chorizo in puff pastry with Dijon mustard or chicken porcupines (cubed chicken lightly fried with sliced almonds) and served with honey mustard. And let's not forget desserts, such as mini cheesecakes or Julieenne's favorite, freshly baked cookies.

For their catering events, Julieenne has a special menu featuring a vast selection of hors d'oeuvres that includes barbecue chicken with crumbled Sillies, salmon with cornshells, baked goat cheese with jalapeno, pitas, sweet potato fritters with crema fraiche and that Backstreet Boy favorite, tuxedo chicken.

The buffet dinner menu offers grilled chicken served three different ways. It can be prepared with cream cheese, mushrooms and white wine or Provençal style with tomatoes, olives and capers. Cajun-style grilled chicken with crispy shallots and popcorn cream is also an option. Vegetarian selections, grilled salmon and herb-roasted Cornish hen are represented. Julieenne's signature dish is a salmon and California sushi rolls, bite-size phyllo dough cups stuffed with portobello mushrooms, spinach and feta cheese, assorted bruschetta, vegetable spring rolls and Fleischman's cakes with cashews, dried apricots, lemon, ginger, garlic and a food coloring tint to give it the "sunshine" hue.

The dinner was served buffet-style and it featured, among other things, grilled chicken and salmon.

Like you, we'd like to be a star to eat like a star on Brooklyn. If you can't manage to get a seat in the limited outdoor garden, Julieenne's crew of five employees will prepare your food to go. Or get it delivered anywhere in Carroll Gardens or Red Hook. (Although Kessler mostly caters corporate parties for minimums of 100 people, he can average of 300 mouths at a time, he makes deliveries to local residents for orders of \$10 or more.)

And come winter, he intends to turn the front patio into an enclosed, heated space. His plans for the future include expanding the Julieenne cafe and opening a restaurant and wine bar either at the same location or elsewhere in the neighborhood. But one thing is certain: Kessler wants to stay in Brooklyn.

Said the Boerum Hill resident, "I'm committed to Brooklyn, because my roots are here."

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# Coming home

**Brooklyn-based Sackett Group is latest addition to Fort Greene's theater district**

By Paulanne Simmons  
for The Brooklyn Papers

**S**ome dreams are worth the wait. Back in 1988, Dan Haft met Robert Weinstein while they were both working on the Heights Players' staging of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat."

"We've been best friends and partners ever since," says Haft.

About two years later, the two men founded a nonprofit, project-based theatrical company they named The Sackett Group, because at the time, they both lived on Sackett Street in Carroll Gardens. (Weinstein was a tenant of Haft's.)

Most of their projects were produced in Manhattan, but Haft, the group's producing director, says, "Our mission has always been to have a theater in Brooklyn, because we're from Brooklyn."

That dream began to look like a reality on Nov. 1, 2004, when Borough President Marty Markowitz came to a Sackett Group fundraiser.

"A couple of months later, we had a meeting with [Markowitz] and his aides where we expressed the desire to establish a permanent home in Brooklyn," says Haft. "They liked our example of underutilized spaces in Brooklyn, among them the Brooklyn Music School Playhouse [BMS Playhouse]."

Subsequently, Liz Koch, of the borough president's office, contacted Karen Kostanza, founder of the Brooklyn Music School, to let her know,

"Over the next 18 months, we met, we negotiated and the two boards ratified a collaboration agreement," says Haft. And this spring the Sackett Group announced its premiere season as the resident company at the BMS Playhouse, located at 126 St. Felix Street in the heart of the BAM Cultural District.

"The Sackett Group has a stage expertise that, hopefully, we can bring to our students at a later date," Krieger told GO Brooklyn. "So we can offer theater as part of our curriculum down the road." Members of the Sackett Group have



Celebration time: The Sackett Group's Producing Director Rob Weinstein and Artist Director Dan Haft show off their new home in the Brooklyn Music School's Playhouse in Fort Greene.

## THEATER

The Sackett Group's production of "Suddenly Last Summer" continues through Aug. 1 at the BMS Playhouse at 126 St. Felix St. at Lafayette Avenue in Fort Greene. Performances are Thursday through Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 5 p.m. Tickets are \$19; a season pass is \$75. For more information, visit the Web site [www.sackettgroup.org](http://www.sackettgroup.org).

already helped the Brooklyn Music School with lighting for its production of "A Brooklyn Nutcracker," staged last December, as well as the June dance recital. This summer, the Sackett Group artistic director, plan to stage four productions, beginning with Tennessee Williams' "Suddenly Last Summer" (which opened on July 14 and continues through Aug. 7). The three other productions this season are "Women's Work V," the Sackett Group's fifth festi-

val of one-act plays, directed by six of the city's emerging female directors (Oct. 26-Nov. 20); Arthur Miller's little-known "The American Clock" (Jan. 26-Feb. 12); and the world premiere of Joe Costanza, who hails from Queens, is a working Hollywood actor whom Haft met in the early '80s while doing his Actors Equity apprenticeship at the Farnsworth Playhouse in Cape Cod. Both Joe and his brother, George, are close friends of Jerry Seinfeld, and Weinstein says George is partly the inspiration behind the "Seinfeld" character of the same name. Joe will be coming back east to direct his play about the everyday adventures of a Queens family in July 1979.

When the Sackett Group moves into the Brooklyn Music School and the Sackett Group, the BMS Playhouse, once known as "the Little Open House" because of its proximity to the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Open House, will again become part of the borough's theatrical life.

none of these stories is told in enough depth to be interesting, without huge amounts of background information brought to the plate by the members of the audience.

Performing against the backdrop of an American flag with baseballs substituting for stars,

Boccock adds as much physically as verbally to his narrative show. He dances, mimics and mimics. Burke has done an admirable job keeping him moving.

Paul Boocock is not a wonderful dancer, and his Ronald Reagan sometimes morphs into Dubya (although, proving all Republicans don't sound alike, he sounds like it too). Paul Ch. (Cirque) and the fifth member of Boocock presents up a hat and swings at an invisible ball, the novelty (if there ever was any) wears thin.

When Boocock tries to connect his politics to his analogies are mostly verbal lies. "Shock and awe won't work in baseball," he says and later talks about an "Enron Stadium." He doesn't describe baseball as an "advanced form of democracy and democracy is a team sport."

Was Rose's passion for gambling really a way of being patriotic? Did Strawberry's substance abuse problem have anything to do with racism or jet fuel?

An hour of "Boocock's House of Baseball" felt like a game that went into too many extra-innings.

the fact that Ty Cobb was a member of the Ku Klux Klan? Can we really blame the Yankees for failing to win the World Series in the last few years on the president?

When we really love something or someone we tend to see the world as centered on the ob-

ject of our affections. That's why amorous people are sometimes called "lovestruck." Clearly Boocock loves baseball. But it is fair to wonder if he is the object of strangers to share his obsession.

Monologues are strenuous undertakings. Solo performers succeed on the strength of their personalities or the personalities they create. Boocock reveals nothing about himself but himself, except that he has a love-hate relationship with baseball and a hate-hate relationship with George W. Bush and his administration. Nor does he tell the audience anything truly compelling about either players or politicians.

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# Odd man out

**It's swing and a miss for Sloper's baseball and politics one-man show**

By Paulanne Simmons  
for The Brooklyn Papers

**P**eople who love baseball and hate George W. Bush will find a home in Paul Boocock's "Boocock's House of Baseball" at The Flea Theater in SoHo ... but there's not much else to recommend the oddball show.

The one-man show, a political piece and his second collaboration with director Mary Catherine Burke. Their first show, "Boocock-VP," also used some baseball material, but it was more about politics than baseball. "Boocock-VP" focused on how much better it is to be vice president than president because the VP gets all the glory and none of the blame.

"Boocock's House of Baseball" is better than the original, but still America's favorite pastime is until basketball and football come along) and what's come of it at the hands of greedy owners and troubled players. But



Paul Boocock stars in "Boocock's House of Baseball," on stage at The Flea Theater in Manhattan through July 23.

there's something forced about the way Boocock insists on seeing current events through the prism of the game. One can't help but feel he's been forced to make analogies with the game of chess (the battles, the maneuvers, the royalty and the pawns, the settling of old grudges when the pawns make

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## Engagement & Wedding Announcements

### ENGAGEMENTS

#### Cass – Catton

Christina Elizabeth Cass, of Park Slope, and James Robert Catton, of Surrey, England, plan to be married on Sept. 4, 2005, in New Canaan, Conn., at the St. Alphonsus Catholic Church. Monsignor Scheyd and Father Rufin will officiate.



The bride-to-be is a self-employed producer and director, and is the daughter of Laurence and Helen Cass of Stamford, Conn. She attended Stamford High School and Fordham University.

The groom-to-be is an entertainment manager and is the son of Charlotte and the late Eric Catton.

#### How did you meet?

The bride says: "We met on a cruise around South America. He was assistant manager, and I was traveling with my family. I heard he had a total jerk at first, but once I heard his music (he's a composer) I figured, 'There's no way a total jerk could write such magnificent, sensitive music ...' I was hooked."

"Since he was at sea, on a cruise ship, it was very easy to get together. We called and wrote a lot of letters. The only times we got to see each other for the next eight or nine months was

bended knee, and I was able to utter (at last) an appropriate answer! It turns out he had bought the ring months earlier, because he was so sure about us. We met in March 2003, and he proposed in June 2004."

#### WEDDINGS

#### Fong – Egozi

Samantha A. Fong, 35, and Alon Egozi, 39, who reside in Park Slope, were married on June 4 in Katonah, N.Y.

The bride is the daughter of Richard and Linda Fong, of Riverdale, N.J., where she grew up. She attended River Dell High School, as well as Villanova University and Rutgers Law School. She is currently employed by the Hodgson Russ law firm.

The groom is the son of Lily and the late Raphael Egozi, of West Orange, N.J., and is a graduate of Mount Holyoke College and the New Jersey Institute of Technology, and is currently employed as a project engineer for a bridge painting business.

The couple met at a mutual friend's birthday party in the fall of November 2001 and became engaged in July 2004.

#### Lovely wedding

The bride says: "It was a beautiful garden wedding held at an outdoor concert location called Caramoor, in Katonah. Japanese lanterns lit the way and the atmosphere was filled with the smell of fragrant peonies and irises.

Both the ceremony and reception were held outdoors in the sunken garden under a big tent. The guests danced, drank and ate under the stars."

**Who proposed, and how?**

The bride says: "About one year after we met, James proposed to me while dancing at the 150-year-old Blackpool Ballroom, in Blackpool, England. We were doing a Spike Lee sort of spin while we were dancing, and James asked me if I would marry him. He had to repeat it three times, because I was laughing so hard. I was at a loss for words. I say 'thank you' Took me completely by surprise. Finally, he said, 'Maybe now's not the right time.'

"Three weeks later he asked again on

tonah. Japanese lanterns lit the way and the atmosphere was filled with the smell of fragrant peonies and irises. Both the ceremony and reception were held outdoors in the sunken garden under a big tent. The guests danced, drank and ate under the stars."

#### Who proposed, and how?

The bride says: "Alon proposed at the foot of the lighthouse at Robert Moses State Park during a vacation to Fire Island. He said, 'Let's not tell anyone — keep it just between us.' I agreed. But the moment we got home, he started telling everyone!"

**Visit [www.TheBrooklynBride.com](http://www.TheBrooklynBride.com) to submit your wedding engagement announcement. Announcements are run on a space available basis. Our next issue is Aug. 13.**

## And the winner is...

Dyker Heights couple wins our 7-day cruise

The winners of The Brooklyn Bride June cruise giveaway, sponsored by Michael C. Fina, are Karen Dean and Michael Rizak, of Dyker Heights, who plan to be married on Oct. 27, 2005.

The bride-to-be is the daughter of Robin and John Dean, who now live in New Jersey. Dean attended New Utrecht High School.

The groom-to-be is the son of Christine and Charlie Rizak, of Dyker Heights. He is a graduate of Bishop Ford High School and is employed by the city Department of Sanitation.

The couple started dating in April 2000, and were engaged in 2003.

#### How did you meet?

Says Dean: "We were both working at the Gap on 86th Street and Fifth Avenue. He was going out with another girl, but I didn't think I made my intentions known. Says Rizak: "She was right!"

#### Who proposed, and how?

Says Dean: "Well, I actually proposed to him. I had been on vacation visiting

relatives in Minnesota for two weeks. When I got back, he told me, he hadn't been able to sleep while I was gone. I decided to take advantage of all that sleep deprivation and figured he can't say no, he's just too tired."

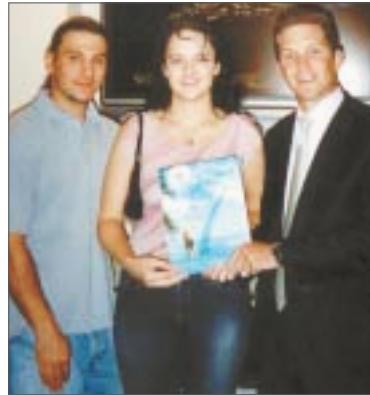
#### Concerns about the wedding:

Says Rizak: "The expenses are one area of concern, and it's also tough arranging a wedding like it would be to be a really memorable event, taking place in Scotland or Ireland. But our families are not big on traveling."

Says Dean: "Having it outdoors is really important to us both, especially with the autumn leaves looking so great that time of year. We're thinking about the Brooklyn Botanic Garden as a place..."

The seven-day cruise-for-two will take Dean and Rizak to either the Caribbean or the Mexican Riviera, depending on the couple's preference.

To enter to win *The Brooklyn Bride* July 2005 cruise-for-two, sponsored by Michael C. Fina, fill out the form below, or visit our Web site at [www.TheBrooklynBride.com](http://www.TheBrooklynBride.com).



Michael Rizak and Karen Dean receive their cruise from Jeffrey Fina (at right), vice president of Michael C. Fina.

## Win a honeymoon

Enter The Brooklyn Bride contest to win a 7-night cruise for two to the Caribbean or Mexican Riviera, sponsored by MICHAEL C. FINA



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Mail to: July Contest, The Brooklyn Bride, c/o The Brooklyn Papers, 55 Washington St., Ste 624, Brooklyn, NY 11201. ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY WED. AUG. 3. Or enter online at [www.TheBrooklynBride.com](http://www.TheBrooklynBride.com). ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY WED. AUG. 3.

BRIDE'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

GROOM'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

WEDDING DATE (between January 1, 2005 and December 2007): \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE & ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

DAYTIME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EVENING PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME AND RELATION OF PERSON SUBMITTING ENTRY:  
□ BRIDE □ GROOM □ OTHER SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_

by The Brooklyn Papers.

and returning an Affidavit of Eligibility and a Publicity Release; otherwise, an alternate member of The Brooklyn Papers staff designated by The Brooklyn Papers management may be chosen. The Brooklyn Papers reserves the right to disqualify any entry submitted by the The Brooklyn Papers judges at their sole discretion.

No purchase necessary to enter. Contest information and rules are available at [www.TheBrooklynBride.com](http://www.TheBrooklynBride.com). By submitting an entry, contest participants agree to be bound by these rules.

3) The deadline for all entries is Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2005. Entries submitted by mail must be in the office of The Brooklyn Papers, and entries submitted online must be received from the designated e-mail box, not later than 11:59 p.m. on Aug. 3, 2005. Mail and direct e-mail to: The Brooklyn Bride, The Brooklyn Papers, 55 Washington St., Suite 624, Brooklyn, NY 11201. All entries must be postmarked by Aug. 3, 2005. Entries may not be personally delivered to the office of The Brooklyn Papers.

4) The Brooklyn Papers is not responsible for lost or damaged mail or courier deliveries or e-mails.

5) The winner will be notified by phone, e-mail or written on or before Friday, Aug. 5, 2005. The winner will have 30 days after notification is sent by The Brooklyn Papers to claim the prize by completing, signing

and returning an Affidavit of Eligibility and a Publicity Release; otherwise, an alternate member of The Brooklyn Papers staff designated by The Brooklyn Papers management may be chosen. The Brooklyn Papers reserves the right to disqualify any entry submitted by the The Brooklyn Papers judges at their sole discretion.

6) The winner must be at least 18 years of age.

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By Barbara Pease, Inc. 2005

# Cinderella for a day

From pumpkin-shaped carriages to Rolls Royces, how to exit and arrive at your ceremony in style

By Alja Grozdanic  
*For The Brooklyn Papers*

**I**t's a rare little girl who hasn't dreamed of being Cinderella — at least for a day.

The fantasy goes something like this: Her life is about to change when she arrives at the grand ball, dressed in a gown designed by a set of beautiful white horses. Her entrance is announced by royal trumpeters. And inside the enchanted palace, er, reception hall, Prince Charming arrives, ready to sweep her off to the moon. She might even get to ride on a carriage pulled by a team of white ponies.

No longer the stuff of childhood dreams, fairytale are becoming reality for women of all ages in Brooklyn. Believe it or not, there is a fairy Godmother there waiting to turn you into a Cinderella for a day.

"It's BYOP (Bring Your Own Prince.) And it would help if the two of you were ready to get married,"

she says. "But I'm not talking about 30s and 40s, but a lot of brides in their 20s and 30s," said Pauline Valentine, one of New York's fairy godmothers and co-owner of the Bronx-based Valentine Carrige, which specializes in storybook weddings and other events.

Women still want to live out their fantasy to the full. Pauline and her son, Richie Valentine, have added an enclosed, transparent Cinderella pumpkin carriage to their fleet.

"The pumpkin carriage is getting more and more popular," Valentine told GO Brooklyn. The carriage comes equipped with two white horses and two coachmen

dressed in elegant silver and blue attire (that's definitely not from this century). The carriage can seat up to 12 people and pale pink for three hours. The full royal treatment includes Richie announcing the bride's parents as the king and queen upon their arrival to the ceremony. "We announce them as the royal family," explained Valentine.

"It's a great way to make a changeable but usually goes something like: 'Her Royal Majesty, mother of the bride, Queen — insert real name — and His Royal Majesty, father of the bride, King Edward — Richard — or whatever his name is of Bensonhurst or Staten Island.' It's a great way to do it."

"Fathers love it," said Pauline.

Richie also announces the bride as a princess. After the church ceremony, he makes a final announcement, honoring the bride and the groom for the first time together as prince and princess of their neighborhood.

The Valentine's have helped thousands of blushing brides make a fairytale en-

trance on their big day, rain or shine. Snow, on the other hand, is a bit tougher on the horses.

Billy and Stormy, two 1,800-pound white draft horses, were used in a Bath Beach Cinderella wedding in May. This breed, commonly used in farm labor as well as to pull carriages, is larger than the average pony. And while the carriage and horses, there was a crowd-pulling attraction in their own right, as they elegantly arrived at St. Finbar's Roman Catholic Church with the bride and her father in tow.

"We do hundred of weddings a year and we've never had a cancellation," said Pauline.

Because of the growing demand, the Valentines recommend booking the carriage six months to a year in advance. At present, six white horses and six different carriages are available for rental.

**Transportation alternatives**

For a less expensive fantasy, non-Cinderella types can choose from Valentine Carrige's selection of more conventional open and enclosed coaches and carriages, which, at \$95 for three hours, come with white horses and coachmen dressed in top hats, tails, breeches and tall boots.

Brides who have outgrown the fairytale stage of their life and would like to adapt their wedding to the 21st century, have the option of making their grand entrance in a limousine — in a sharp-looking stretch limousine.

The classically elegant bride can make her mark in an always chic Rolls Royce. The two-passenger Corniche is in the \$600 to \$720 price range, while the four-passenger Princess can be booked at \$800 for three hours. Valentine's Excalibur Limousine in Bay Ridge.

While some modern brides may opt for the standard Lincoln Towncar, which seats 12 and costs \$400 for three hours, other contemporary brides' needs might be met with a more SUV-style vehicle. Lincoln Navigator (from \$1,000 to \$1,500 for three hours) or their newest addition, QX56 (\$1000 for three hours), are popular choices for large wedding parties.

And although it does not come with an ever-after marriage guarantee, a horse-drawn carriage plus the royal treatment, will ensure that at least your wedding day feels like a fairytale.



**Then and now:** (Top) A horse-drawn, pumpkin-shaped coach from Valentine Carrige brings a bride to her Carroll Gardens ceremony on July 2. (Above) Executive Stretch offers an 18-passenger limousine, roomy enough to allow the bride space to stand up and walk around on her way to and from her wedding.

Some brides rent two limos, one for the married couple and the other for the bridal party, said Michael Malia, owner of Executive Stretch in Bensonhurst. A popular classical combination, he said, is the company's signature four-passenger 1933 Packard (\$800 for three hours) for the bride and groom and a 14-passenger Lincoln (\$1,000 for three hours) for the wedding party. A more hipster, Malia said, might opt for an eight-passenger Jaguar (\$700 for three hours) or Mercedes (\$800 for three hours) for themselves and an 18-passenger Cadillac Escalade or a Hummer H2 (both \$800 for three hours).

One of the newest trends, said Denise Barnard, one of Malia's employees, is the limo bus (\$700 for three hours). The 18-passenger vehicle looks like a minibus on the outside, while its interior resembles a high-tech entertainment room, with flat screens, television screens and DVD players.

"Brides like it because you can stand up in it and walk around," said Barnard. There seems to be a way for every woman to make an unforgettable grand entrance, the Valentines recommend booking the carriage six months to a year in advance. At present, six white horses and six different carriages are available for rental.

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And although it does not come with an ever-after marriage guarantee, a horse-drawn carriage plus the royal treatment, will ensure that at least your wedding day feels like a fairytale.

But most importantly she gives advice on how to slow down and simply enjoy the journey more:

- Bring a camera to capture the expressions on your parents' faces when you tell them you are engaged, your wedding rehearsal, trying on dresses, and other happy events. Combine the photos with memorabilia you find along the way to create a scrapbook you'll always cherish.

- If you have ceremony stage fright (Brockway calls it "performance anxiety"), try your dress on when you're home alone and practice moving around in it and waving your arms around to look at the event (sexy, glamorous or joyous). Plus, who doesn't want to spend extra time prancing around in their wedding dress?

- Put time to rejuvenate yourself on your to-do list. Use it to get a massage, exercise or read a great book.

As Brockway says, "What can set you apart from all the other couples who have a traditional 'Stress Express' to the altar is to make a decision up front that you will go above the bustle of being a bride to have the conscious intention to stay present, enjoy the journey, and feel the blessings of this very short yet intense period of your life."

# Don't go bridal

How-to book puts focus on being a calmer, happier bride

By Lisa J. Curtis  
*For The Brooklyn Papers*

**W**hile a bride might purchase a dozen bridal gown magazines and reception how-to books to prepare for her big day, it's a rare woman who has the time to walk down the bookstore's self-help aisle.

While the fashion mags and party planning literature are important for a bride who understands what to look for best as well as orchestrate a meaningful wedding, the self-help books on those publications rarely address the negative emotional reactions that an impending wedding can trigger in a bride and her family. So she might need another resource to deplete her rapidly diminishing patience and good humor.

Brockway's book is aimed at flushing a bride's mind and face the marriage-monster under the mattress, you'll find that there's nothing to it and you'll be able to come to terms with setbacks and enjoy this important time. But if you don't, you could continue to be a prisoner of your fears or anger — or worse, boil over at an inappropriate time.

## Bride's Guide

*"Wedding Goddess: A Divine Guide to Transforming Weddings into Wedding Bliss,"* by Laurie Sue Brockway (Perigee Books, \$16.95), is available at Barnes & Noble, Borders, Books-A-Million, Books in Cobble Hill (787 6th Street), Books & Books (267 Seventh Ave.), Books & Books in Park Slope (718) 238-3677) and Books-A-Million.

Even if you're not a bride, you may find the book useful. Brockway advises taking control by doing something as easy as finding a friendly ear. She suggests reaching out to a support group like the Bridal Survival Club (available through the New York Wedding Show or visiting the website [www.bridalsurvivalclub.com](http://www.bridalsurvivalclub.com)) or the Brooklyn Bridal Confession Booth ([www.bridalconfessionbooth.com](http://www.bridalconfessionbooth.com)) at [goingbridal.com](http://www.goingbridal.com).

The Brooklyn Bride continues inside ~ Win a honeymoon cruise!